

Online Tutorial

To help out the many people who are interested in learning taiko but have no access to an instructor, Rolling Thunder presents an Online Tutorial. This tutorial will teach you the rhythm of Kitakami Sansa-daiko, a festival piece from the city of Kitakami in Iwate prefecture.

[About the Tutorial](#)

[Sansa-daiko Tutorial](#)

Please also take a look at the information in [Learning Taiko](#).

About The Tutorial

Learning taiko is an process best carried out with a competent instructor. There are many aspects beyond the rhythms that are important to taiko as an art, and they are difficult to properly learn without the guidance of a teacher. Most of these aspects have to do with the spirit, respect and approach of the player to the drums, the other players and to the art form itself. To merely play the rhythms, would be to miss the essence of the art.

To help introduce people to some of the visual aspects of taiko, Rolling Thunder has also produced the [Introduction to Taiko](#) video tape. This tape, the first of its kind in English, has an overview of the different drum types, examples of stances, how to hold the bachi, instruction of basic rhythms, and instructions on how to tension a shime-daiko. The tape also includes short examples of many different playing styles. Since the Online Tutorial does not include any information on stances or movement, the Introduction to Taiko video is an excellent companion to the tutorial.

Sansa-daiko Tutorial

Sansa-daiko is a traditional festival piece from Iwate Prefecture. While the underlying rhythm is similar to many "Matsuri" (festival) pieces all over Japan, Sansa-daiko has a unique variation to call its own. There are also several regional variations throughout Iwate. Sansa-daiko is often played with a special mid-size Sansa style okedo hung from the neck and shoulders of the drummer. This allows the drummer to dance while playing. Morioka, the capital of Iwate, has a wonderful festival each summer where the main street is filled with a seemingly endless parade of dancing Sansa-daiko drummers. The image above is from Morioka's Sansa-Matsuri.

This particular variation of Sansa-daiko is from Kitakami's Geino Matsuri. There are three sections to the piece: The first section is played twice, the second section is played once, and the third section is played three times. There is vocal part that is chanted, but other than marking down the syllables on the notation, this tutorial will not deal with it. The choreography is also beyond the scope of this tutorial.

Each note is marked R for right hand, or L for left hand.

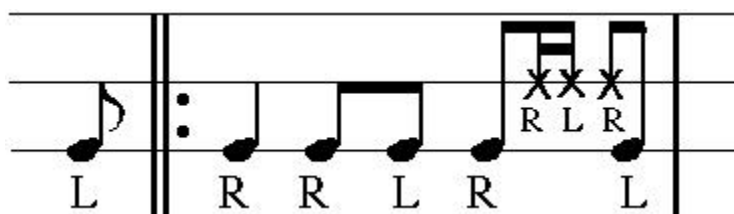
- [Section one](#)
- [Section two](#)
- [Section three](#)
- Listen to [Sansa Daiko](#), each section played once through.

Sansa-Daiko Tutorial Section One

This is the first section of Sansa-daiko. The first section is played twice through before going on to section two.

The music has been written out in western notation, and the Taiko syllables are written below. The X marks represent the Ka syllable - or a beat on the fuchi (edge of the drum). Please pay attention to which beats are played with the right or left hand; the beats on the fuchi can get a little tricky.

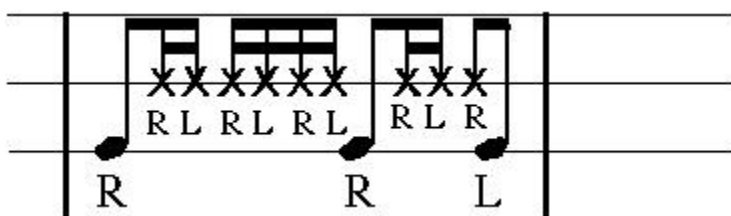
Click on any of staffs to hear it played, or click at the bottom of the page to hear one repetition of section one. These sound files are 22.3MHz .aiff files, and range from 75-100Kb.



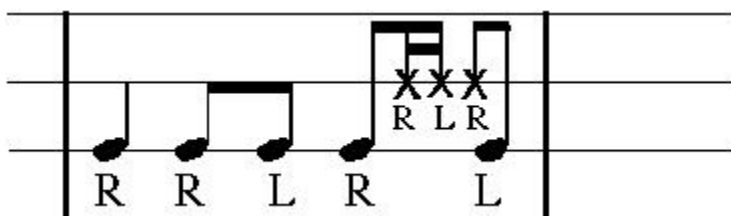
DON DON DO-KO DON KA-TA KA DON



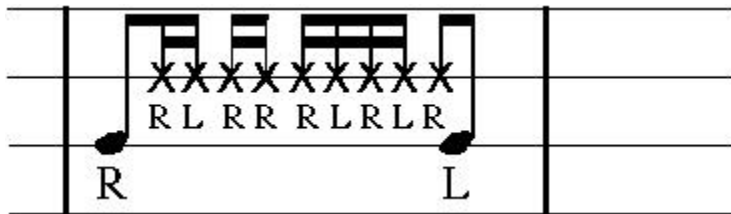
DO-KO SU DO-KON DO-KO KA-TA KA DON



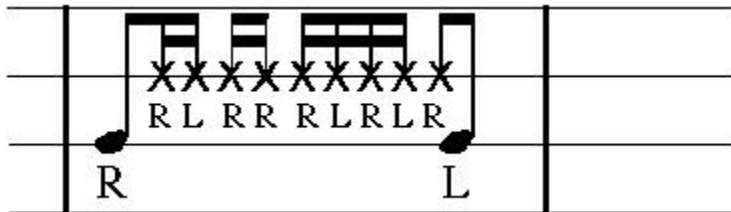
DON KA-TA KA-TA KA-TA DON KA-TA KA DON



DON DO-KO KA-TA KA DON



DON KA-TA KA KA KA-TA KA-TA KA DON



DON KA-TA KA KA KA-TA KA-TA KA DON

Hear [section one](#) of Sansa-daiko played through one time. This sound is a 19 second, 22.3MHz .aiff file, 418Kb.

Sansa-Daiko Tutorial Section Two

This is the second section of Sansa-daiko. This section is only one bar long and is only played once.

The music has been written out in western notation, and the Taiko syllables are written below. The X marks represent the Ka syllable - or a beat on the fuchi (edge of the drum). Please pay attention to which beats are played with the right or left hand; the beats on the fuchi can get a little tricky.

Click on the staff to hear it played. This sound file is a 22.3MHz .aiff file, and is 99Kb.

DON KA-TA KA DON DON KA-TA KA KA KA-TA KA-TA KA DON

Sansa-Daiko Tutorial Section Three

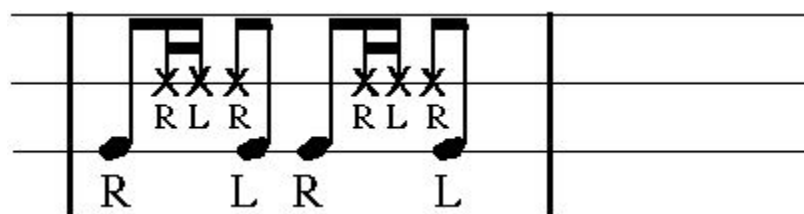
This is the third section of Sansa-daiko. The third section is played three times and then the song ends. The last note is not plated on the last repetition.

The music has been written out in western notation, and the Taiko syllables are written below. The X marks represent the Ka syllable - or a beat on the fuchi (edge of the drum). Please pay attention to which beats are played with the right or left hand; the beats on the fuchi can get a little tricky.

Click on any of the staves to hear it played, or click on the bottom to hear one repetition of section three. These sound files are 22.3MHz .aiff files, and range from 55-100Kb.



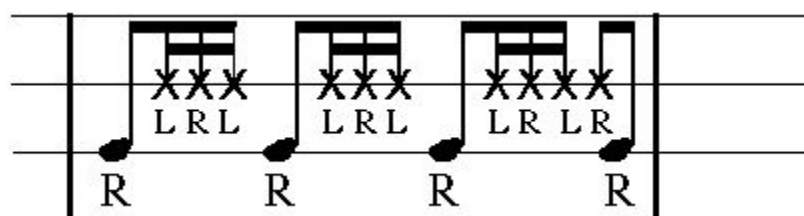
DON DON DO-KO DO-KO DON KA-TA KA DON



DON KA-TA KA DON DON KA-TA KA DON



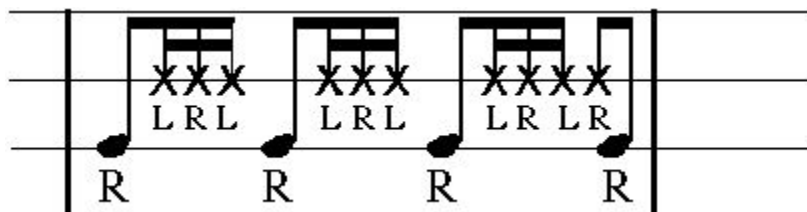
DON DON DO-KO DO-KO DON DO-KO DON DON



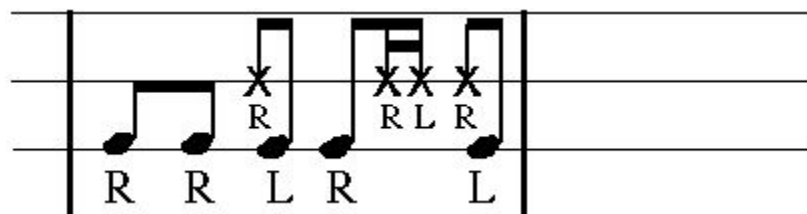
DON KA KA KA DON KA KA KA DON KA KA KA KA DON



DON DON DO-KO DO-KO DON DO-KO DON DON



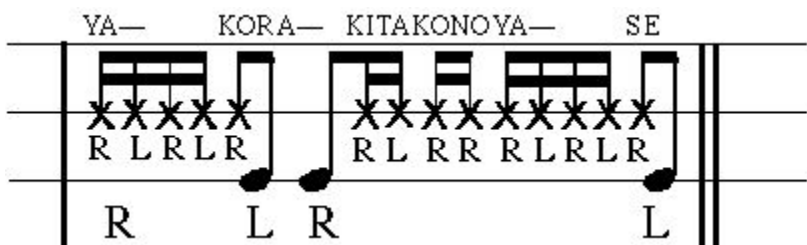
DON KA KA KA DON KA KA KA DON KA KA KA KA DON



DON DON KA DON DON KA-TA KA DON



DON DON DO-KO DO-KO DON KA-TA KA SU



KA-TA KA-TA KA DON DON KA-TA KA KA KA-TA KA-TA KA DON

Hear [section three](#) of Sansa-daiko played through one time. This sound is a 22 second, 22.3MHz .aiff file, 462Kb.